Our Report to
The Addison City Council

Addison Citizens Advisory Committee on Education

March 28, 2007

Education Committee Recommendation to Council

We recommend two areas for Council consideration and action. The first relates to the public education of Addison children. The second is adult continuing education. Our recommendations are premised on the following:

- Great municipalities have more superior educational opportunities for their residents, businesses, and visitors than the municipalities that surround them.
- Superior educational opportunities are an economic driver for a municipality.
- Public schools for Addison children should be accountable to Addison parents and taxpayers.
- Addison citizens should have greater ownership of education for their children.
- Addison parents should have the freedom to choose better options when public schools fail their children (as in the case of underachieving schools.)
- Addison would be a better-rounded, more stable community if the ages of its citizenry were not as concentrated in the pre-parenthood adult years and the senior years - which is a census anomaly directly attributable to the current status of public education in Addison.

Public Education for Addison Children

The Big Idea is that the Town of Addison take control of the education of its own children by exploring options to change the current status of education for children in Addison in two areas:

- The creation of either an Addison Independent School District (AISD) or an Addison municipal charter school (AMCS). Should an AISD be feasible, there would be little difference between its structure and that of an AMCS other than what is necessary to secure school tax monies currently being paid to Dallas Independent School District (DISD) and Carrollton Farmers Branch School District (CFBISD).
- Seeking legislative changes that would result in the monies currently paid to DISD and CFBISD to go to either AISD or AMCS instead.

This is important to Addison because the current quality of education provided by both DISD and CFBISD is unacceptable, particularly for the amount of property tax taken out of Addison for support of education.

Based on data provided by staff committee members regarding:

- The present valuation of Addison's property tax rolls ($3 billion)
- The number of children of Addison residents attending DISD (296) and CFBISD (259) this year
- The relative portion of the tax base whose location and valuation determines the portion of taxes going to each district (estimated at $2.4 billion to DISD and $600 million to CFBISD)
- The current tax rates of DISD ($1.68836) and CFBISD ($1.8259)

The net result of this is that for every student attending each of those districts respectively, Addison sends DISD $138,200 in property taxes and sends CFBISD $42,700. These per student amounts significantly outpace the (state average of $9,300).

Neither DISD or CFBISD provides a caliber of education consistent with the superior levels Addison provides residents in all other measures of quality of life, and neither shows any capacity to improve beyond its current level in this regard. Addison could set the standard for the urban school of the future. The Addison school we visualize would deliver a superior education by incorporating the following elements that consistently are found to contribute to superior child education in public schools:

- Local control and governance reflecting Addison values and needs
- A small, family-centered school
- Better than adequate spending per pupil on resources and materials
- An energy-efficient, healthy and attractive school facility
- Student physical and psychological safety
- All students, not just top performers, are given challenging and worthwhile educational tasks

- Individual or personal attention for all students
- Extensive technology use, enabling customized instruction

In addition, an AMCS could also outperform neighboring districts in the following way if these values were a part of the charter:

- Mandatory parent involvement
- Active student involvement
- Instruction in a language other than English from Kindergarten on
- Visual and performing arts

The suggested next step is a full-scale feasibility study that that addresses the following:

- What Texas legislative changes, implemented statewide rather than just for Addison, are necessary in order to create an AISD - other than the statutory requirement for minimum number of students and minimum number of square miles served by the newly created district - and what is the feasibility of accomplishing this change?
- What Texas legislative changes, implemented statewide rather than just for Addison, are necessary in order to enable schools chartered to a municipality (MCS) to receive the educational property taxes of that municipality, and what is the feasibility of accomplishing this change?
- What Texas legislative changes, implemented statewide, rather than just for Addison, are necessary in order for an educational voucher used to attend a MCS to be classified differently and have a higher dollar value than voucher use for private schools or non-municipal charter schools, and what is the feasibility of accomplishing this change?
- Which among the 1206 incorporated municipalities or 1034 Independent School Districts within the State of Texas are potential allies in seeking any of these three legislative changes; what is the number for each of these possibilities; and which of the three has the most identified allies?
- What is the impact on the property values and taxation of Addison if an AISD or AMCS is created?
- What is the impact on the business environment of Addison if an AISD or AMCS is created?
- What is the impact on the municipal finances of Addison if an AISD or an AMCS is created?
- What are the necessary steps to create either an AISD or an AMCS?
- What sites are available and appropriate for either an AISD or an AMCS?
- What are the projected fiscal needs to bring either an AISD or an AMCS to fruition?
- What is the opinion of the citizenry of Addison, ideally voiced via voter referendum, regarding either an AISD or an AMCS?
- What should the curriculum of an "Addison caliber," 21st century, urban school look like?

Please refer to Appendices A, C, and D regarding child education in Addison. Appendix A contains one possible vision of public education for Addison children, Appendix C contains additional discussion of changes in the Texas political landscape for public education, and Appendix D is a Time Magazine cover story article on what the curriculum of the 21st century should look like.

Adult Continuing Education

The Big Idea is that the Town of Addison develops, implements, and operates an unmatched adult education program, which would do the following things on as rapid a timetable as possible:

- Provide an additional reason for the construction of a multi-purpose municipal facility
- Implement recommendations of numerous Citizens Advisory Committees for educational functions related to their area of interest, for example, culinary classes or a culinary center, etc.
- Develop a new economic driver for the Addison economy

This is important to Addison because anything that makes a new multi-use municipal facility capable of generating revenue to pay for operating and capital costs will enable it to be built sooner than otherwise would be possible. Adult continuing education can fill time slots when portions of such a facility would ordinarily be unused and generate a revenue stream to help fund such a facility.

A multi-use municipal facility will be able to provide space to facilitate recommendations from other 2030 citizen advisory committees.

Adult continuing education can stay uniquely relevant as an economic driver merely by changes in the curriculum. The uniqueness of current core economic drivers of the Addison economy continues to wane with each passing year.

- High concentrations of varied eating and drinking establishments in immediate proximity to each other exist throughout the entire Metroplex.
- Other municipalities are planning airports with an eye toward luring away the corporate jets based at the Addison airport and the important tax revenue they provide. The projected Allen airport is closer to Plano, McKinney, and Frisco, where many of the executives flying in those corporate jets reside.
- Beer and wine are sold widely in numerous municipalities, and the possibility of liquor eventually following suit cannot be ruled out.

Adult continuing education is very similar to Addison's festivals as an economic driver because:

- It consumes a very small geographic footprint for the economic impact generated.
- Visitors to Addison span a continuum with three variables:
    1. The greater the distance they travel to Addison, the more deliberate their plans to come must be - and therefore probably fewer potential numbers.
    2. The shorter the distance, the more impulsive plans to come to Addison can be, and the greater the numbers of potential visitors.
    3. Since the magnet of adult continuing education draws visitors from shorter distances, these are the easiest visitors to attract.
- If implemented on a scale that will draw students from throughout the Metroplex, adult continuing education's economic impact can grow to approximate the impact of our series of annual festivals.

The suggested next step is to study whether an adult continuing education program operated on the scale of FunED could maximize the utilization of a multi-purpose municipal facility and enable its affordable construction on a faster timetable. Such a study should address:

- Should adult continuing education be a responsibility of the Parks and Recreation department or a new department of adult continuing education?
- What design elements would such a facility need to include to best facilitate its use as an adult continuing education facility, including the design elements of the various spaces within it?
- What location for such a facility would best facilitate its use as an adult continuing education facility?
- How large should such a facility be to best facilitate its use as an adult continuing education facility?
- How can the positive memories and past experiences of Metroplex residents regarding FunED and FunED's close geographic proximity to Addison be leveraged to contribute to Addison's entry into the adult continuing education marketplace of the Metroplex as a major player?
- What are the construction fiscal requirements of such a facility if adult continuing education is a cornerstone of its use?

- What are the operating fiscal requirements of such a facility if adult continuing education is a cornerstone of its use?
- What traditional and non-traditional curriculum will best contribute to the success of an Addison adult continuing education endeavor?
- How can admissions and pricing policy be used to establish preferential status for Addison residents?
- How can admissions and pricing policy be used to establish preferential status for Addison businesses?
- What are the mechanisms (such as dining discount coupons sent with enrollment confirmations) that can increase patronage at Addison eating and drinking establishments to generate an increase in Addison sales tax revenues?
- How should such an adult continuing education endeavor be marketed within the DFW Metroplex?
- Can such an adult continuing education endeavor be integrated with DART for the mutual benefit of Addison and DART?

Please refer to Appendix B regarding adult education in Addison.

Regarding the Appendixes

The task of this committee was to consider what the next big idea in education is, why that is important to Addison, and what the next steps to take are. To do that effectively often necessitated considering sub factors of the topic of our recommendations in both greater detail and further along a timeline of implementation than was our actual responsibility.

We include those thoughts in these appendixes so that those who take up these issues long after this committee's work is complete can have some sense of our vision of those sub components at the time these recommendations were made.

- Appendix A discusses public education for Addison children in greater detail.
- Appendix B discusses adult continuing education in greater detail.
- Appendix C discusses changes in the Texas political landscape for education in greater detail.
- Appendix D is a recent Time Magazine cover story article on what the curriculum of the 21st Century should look like that is extremely timely and relevant.

Appendix A: The Addison School

The school building we envision is a contemporary, state-of-the-art, high-rise facility which takes up less than a quarter of the normal acreage requirements of a traditional school. Some design elements reflect other facilities currently in Addison such as the blue sculpture in Addison Circle. The ground floor serves as office area and drop-off and pick up area for parents. Subsequent floors are per grade level; i.e. floor 2 is kindergarten, floor 3 is 1st grade, floor 4 is 2nd grade, etc. Each floor is designed specifically to meet the needs of that age level only. For example, on the Kindergarten floor bathrooms would be smaller. Floors will be connected by a glass elevator up the center so students are visible at all times. Teachers and administrators are the only ones with access to the workings of the elevator.

Traditional "centers", such as the art center, would not need to be replicated in each class. A centralized art center just for Kindergarten will serve all classrooms on that floor. Other centers will follow the same pattern; thus the classrooms themselves will be smaller because each class will rotate through its floor's centers as needed.

Each floor will also have its own media and technology area designed for the capabilities of students of that grade level. The entire building is wireless. Many functions are computerized, including grades, parent communications, records, etc.

Much student and teacher work involves multi-media processes. There is reduced dependence on outdated and outmoded textbooks. This trend has already begun in science and social science because information changes so rapidly textbook manufacturers can't keep up. Students won't need laptops. Instead they will wear memory sticks daily to use on computers at both school and home. These memory sticks should be integrated into a security device (such as a bar coded name tag) that students have on them at all times.

The school grounds will serve a dual purpose. Gardens will be designed to function as science labs or fair weather outdoor class areas. On the periphery of the grounds are staff and visitor parking and the school bus area.

The roof is the playground. A jogging/running track around and throughout the grounds also helps meet some of the physical education requirements.

The curriculum is a rigorous, achievement-based curriculum which complies with current national and state standards as minimums, but which is aimed at innovation and "best practices." Students attend classes in their grade level most of the day with two exceptions; math and reading. In those two areas students will progress through a series of skill building classes at their own pace. Students test INTO and OUT OF each skill level. Once a student has demonstrated mastery of each level, s/he moves to the next level. Slow students are not required to move into new areas before they are ready, and students who have mastered the skill are not required to wait while others learn and practice the skills.

All students learn English and Spanish; by grade 4, students who are progressing easily through the math and reading skill levels may begin Chinese. All students receive training in whatever technology is current and in keeping with their ability level. Other routine offerings such as fine arts, etc. would reflect the interest and values of the charter school founding committee.

In addition, the founding committee should look at the efficacy of the International Baccalaureate program. On the whole, however, focus for all students is on the acquisition of skills, learning, and technology to prepare them for the future, whether that future is through further academics or skilled work in the community.

Who attends is any child whose parent(s) lives in Addison, whether the final organizational configuration is as AISD or AMCS. In the event the school's formation is as AMCS:

- There are no academic exclusions for reasons of language or ability
- When space is available, students from other areas who wish to attend would do so on the basis of criteria established by the charter school founding committee. Such criteria might include preferences being extended to children of employees of The Town of Addison, grandchildren of Addison residents, or children of persons employed in Addison businesses.

Who will pay for it cannot be addressed prior to knowing the success of legislative changes mentioned in the suggested feasibility study or the current status with DISD. The possibilities here range from using a minority portion of the taxes currently paid to DISD and CFBISD to fund our school, with the majority of those funds going toward property tax relief all the way to the entire cost of an AMCS being in addition to that tax load. Voter input is essential.

There are two unique synergies that should not be ignored:

- The first of these is the 9th through 12th grade magnet school operated by CFBISD on the campus of Brookhaven College with an emphasis on math and science. If an affiliation with this school were to be formalized, it would allow our school to be created for Kindergarten through 8th grade.

- The other is the Westlake, Texas municipal charter school. This is the first municipally chartered school in the State of Texas. Much of what would be an otherwise unknown terrain in founding an AMCS would follow a trail they have already blazed. When all members of our committee, whose schedule fit, had the opportunity to tour this facility, the chief administrator of that school and the mayor of Westlake both expressed a willingness to extend any assistance they could to Addison should we choose to pursue the path of an AMCS.

Appendix B: The Addison Exploratorium

A possible descriptive scenario a few years after implementation comes from the future. Today is Thursday, May 6th, 2010. It is 5:00 PM, and the weather could not be more perfect with a current temperature of 78 degrees. Right now, 241 employees of Addison businesses are eating dinner somewhere in Addison prior to attending their classes this evening at The Addison Exploratorium ™. Another 216 people are on either a DART light rail train or bus headed for Addison using the reduced price pass available with their class enrollment, many reading their class materials from last week instead of bemoaning rush hour traffic. Within the next hour, 117 senior citizen residents of Addison will either walk the short distance from their residence to their Exploratorium™ classes or take the local DART Exploratorium™ Shuttle using the free pass that accompanied their proof of being an Addison resident over the age of 65.

Today's paid daytime reservations of facilities included the renting of two of the kitchen classrooms by an institutional food supplier to demonstrate new products to 50 registered dieticians employed in local hospitals and nursing home, the Town of Addison used one of the lecture halls for annual OSHA compliance training of employees, two of the computer class rooms were reserved by Microsoft to do an in-service on the beta version of a new software for their north Texas corporate sales force, and UNT's College of Hospitality Management, which is offering three satellite classes in Addison Tuesdays and Thursdays this semester had their regularly scheduled classes.

Now the staff is enjoying a moment's respite between the day's activities and the heavier evening schedule. Tonight's classes will be typically diverse, with offerings on a wide variety of subjects. Tonight's scheduled cooking classes will Ethiopian Cuisine, Vegetarian Diet Planning for Complete Protein Nutrition, Changing Your Eating Habits after a Heart Attack, and Learning to Roll Your Own Sushi. Software classes tonight will be on Windows, Word, Excel, PhotoShop, QuickBooks, and AutoCAD. Tonight is Yoga, Pilates, and Big Band Swing Dance in the movement studio classrooms. Art classes tonight are Pottery and in the Grandparent Empowerment Series, Face Painting with the Grandkids. Tonight, the lecture class rooms will house sessions on Purchasing a Used Car, Preparation for Citizenship Naturalization, Qualifying for Insurance Coverage of Gastric Bypass Surgery, a Dallas Board of Realtors professional development continuing education class, and The Sandwich Generation: Living with Parents and Adult Children under One Roof. In the technology orientation sessions, Verizon is offering their monthly class on how to use all the features of their newest cell phone, Apple is teaching consumers how to make their 18th generation iPOD interface wirelessly with satellite radio, and American Express is doing an in-service on their soon to be released Body Implanted Chip-Smart Card technology for people in the banking security industry. The Workshop/Handyman sessions tonight are on Maintaining Your Swimming Pool Water Yourself, Advanced Woodworking, and Installing an Automatic Garage Door Opener. And finally in the language labs, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Arabic are tonight's fare.

Addison's Director of Continuing Education is being interviewed in the lobby by CNN regarding another award The Town of Addison has just won for this facility, as enrolled students for the 6:00 classes are beginning to filter in. It is another good day in Addison. Tonight's enrollment fees have covered operating costs for 1.6 days, and the additional sales tax on those meals eaten in Addison prior to going to class is dropping straight to the municipal budget's bottom line.

The scale of operation of an "Addison grade" adult continuing education program of the scope the committee envisions operating at full implementation could easily be able to draw over 500 adult continuing education students to Addison on a daily basis, and aiming for 1,000 is not unrealistic.

Key elements of success essential in successful marketing:

- A program name that sticks in peoples' minds
- Advertising of sufficient quantity
- The most innovative, comprehensive, and diverse curriculum in the Metroplex
- Unequaled state of the art facilities
- The active support of Addison businesses

The program name selected should

- Contain the word Addison to reinforce the brand awareness of Addison.
- Contain a descriptive word people have not heard before to create a unique identity for this endeavor.
- Allude to the wide scope of the learning experiences available.
- The name should have a tag line that is an intrinsic part of the name to help with branding.

An example of one such name is *The Addison Exploratorium® … The Spa for Your Mind™*

Advertising services should be contracted with those specifically experienced at the successful marketing of experiences as a product to consumers. Their contract should be performance based with compensation tied directly to results produced.

The most innovative, comprehensive, and diverse curriculum in the Metroplex should include both traditional and non-traditional classes so that there is no one who cannot find at least one class of interest.

Traditional adult continuing education classes would include:

- Computer classes that not only include using various software programs, but how to build your own computer, networking more than one computer in the home, creating a website, etc.
- Dance classes of various genres such as swing, ballroom, square, line, salsa, rumba, etc.
- Art classes such as painting, pottery, sculpting, photography, etc.
- Physical activity classes such as yoga, Pilates, aerobics, jogging, exercise for the business traveler, senior citizen exercise, etc.
- Life change classes such as coping with the death, of a spouse, life after divorce, how to select an extended care facility for an aging parent, estate planning, etc.
- Financial classes such as principles of starting a business, selling your own home, managing your 401K's and IRA's, etc.
- Culinary classes such a wine selection and tasting, Greek, Chinese, Italian, Middle Eastern, Indian, and Thai cooking, Pastry, Sushi Rolling, etc.

Examples of non-traditional continuing education classes might include:

- Understanding your health care insurance and how it works
- Learning how to make your cell phone, PDA, TIVO, and any number of other electronic devices do all they are capable of. These classes could be taught by appropriate representative of businesses. For example cell phone classes might be taught by either Cingular or Nokia.
- An independent look at medical procedures normally only discussed by those wanting to perform the procedure such as LASIK eye surgery, plastic surgery, gastric bypass surgery, etc.
- Maintaining your own bicycle
- Green building technology for both new construction and retrofitting
- Social skills such as formal dining etiquette, social norms of other cultures for those traveling abroad, speed dating events, etc.
- Civic matters such as election law for those considering running for office, volunteer opportunity presentations by organizations such as Operation Kindness, SPCA, The Red Cross, American Cancer Society, The Kidney Foundation, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, etc.

Unequaled state of the art facilities could include rooms determined to be suitable for both the multi-use requirements of the facility as well as the continuing education requirements. Special purpose rooms could include:

- Cooking class rooms that might have a back wall with ovens, refrigerators, microwaves, etc, and across from that in a galley layout, a large island of stovetops, sinks, cutting boards, etc, which would be surrounded by an elevated bar-type counter that would seat up to 30 enrolled students. Such rooms could also be rented to fundraising civic groups. For example Chef Stephen Pyles might cook dinner for 30 for a $1,000 per person donation to a charity, symphony, or museum.
- Rooms could be set up for computer classes with about 30 computer dual monitor student desks where instructors could teach via illustration on one monitor while the student works on the other. Such technology equipped rooms would be ideal for training of Addison municipal employees on anything that could be taught via software.
- Some rooms could be tiered seating small auditoriums with audio-visual capabilities for classes suited to a lecture form of instruction, yet at other times used for town meetings, and still other times rented out to satellite universities wanting to hold a class in our area.
- Other auditorium type rooms could be fitted with a large screen for film appreciation classes or classic movie nights for residents.

The active support of Addison businesses could include a cross marketing program. For example, a dining discount coupon program could be established. Coupons could be sent out with course registration materials. Such a program would allow Addison eating and drinking establishments to be listed as a business that honors a dining discount coupon dated for the day of that student's class only. Ethnic restaurants could offer additional special discounts for those taking ethnic cooking classes of the same genre on the same night. This insures that in addition to class enrollment fees, adult continuing education will help fund a multi-use municipal facility through increased sales tax collections.

Additionally Addison businesses could be drawn upon as a resource for curriculum, particularly non-traditional class content.

Location considerations would be to place the facility to be as far west as possible, as close to Beltline as possible. There are two reasons for that. The surrounding land in that area of town is less densely developed, facilitating the subsequent development of more businesses in that end of town, and reducing the higher failure rate of businesses located further west.

Likewise, the location selected should take advantage of proximity to DART so that public transportation can be leveraged to support adult continuing education in Addison. DART may even be able to offer some sort of discount for students on the day of their class only on a coupon that includes bus or train schedules between the student's home and the facility on the day of that student's class.

Site 1 would be to take the Budget Suites Motel via negotiated purchase or eminent domain. This site offers the possibility of reduced capital expense via modification of an appropriate size structure already constructed. This site is within easy walking distance of The Cotton Belt Rail Line as well as both an east-west motor vehicle artery on Beltline Road and a north-south motor vehicle artery on Marsh Lane.

Site 2 would be to seek to subdivide the parcel of land between Pet's Mart and Sally Beauty Supply within the shopping center on the southeast corner of Beltline and Marsh onto separate title for The Town of Addison to acquire. A multi-story facility could be built there to take advantage of existing parking infrastructure of the shopping center. That facility would probably be multi-story, and have no windows facing toward the residences to the south of it. The increase in surrounding property valuation should enable the feasibility of this location.

Site 3 would be a parcel of land already owned by The Town of Addison bounded by the Cotton Belt Rail Line on the south, Addison Road on the west, Festival Way on the north, and Quorum on the east. This location benefits from directly adjoining both the DART Transit Center and The Cotton Belt Rail Line. Being already owned by Addison, the capital construction requirements would be lower. There is a synergy between that location and visibility to festival attendees. Open houses could be held during major events such as Jazz Fest, Kaboom Town, Oktoberfest, etc to increase awareness.

Site 4 would be to locate the facility along Inwood south of Beltline. Such a location is contingent on an eventuality that property in that area will become available via adverse affect on those liquor stores should the sale of beer, wine, and possibly even liquor be allowed in grocery stores in Dallas County. This site would also adjoin the eventual DART light rail line. One drawback to this site is availability may or may not occur.

Site 5 would be to take two to three floors in a new high rise office building being built along the North Dallas Tollway's southbound frontage road. Ideally this would be floors two, three, and four with approximately 25,000 square feet per floor. That building would have normal first floor lobby and shops, but its elevators would go straight to floor five and up. The education facility's floors would have an outside separate entry on floor two. This would utilize the multi-story parking facilities of the office building during the evenings when they would likely be vacant. This option provides the possibility of Tollway visibility for marketing via a building naming agreement. This could also be a building The Town of Addison eventually consolidates other municipal functions under one roof and acquires.

Admission preferences would be that classes are accessible to anyone wishing to enroll. Any preferences will be shown via pricing. Preferential pricing could be extended to Addison residents, employees of Addison, employees of businesses who are headquartered in Addison, employees of a branch of a business headquartered else but the branch the employee works at is within the city limits of Addison, and those over the age of 65.

A class fee mechanism could be patterned similarly to how tickets are sold to pay for things at the State Fair of Texas, for example, a one night class could be one ticket, a four night class meeting once a week for four weeks could be four tickets, a one night class with supply expenses such as a cooking class could be two tickets, etc. Enrolling individuals would be able to buy exactly the number of tickets necessary for one class only if that is their preference. Discounts for buying tickets in volume will be offered to both individuals and businesses. Additional discounts would also be extended to Addison businesses buying tickets for their employees as a benefit of being an Addison business.

Appendix C: Today's Texas Political Climate on Education

The Texas political landscape regarding education has changed enough so that traditional assumptions of what is possible to change need to be reexamined.

The first traditional assumption regarding the creation of a new ISD from an existing one is that the state requirement that any new ISD must encompass 9 square miles of geographic area and a student population of 5,000 can only be overcome by Addison obtaining a legislative exemption from the state of Texas. That is just not the case, nor does it appear it ever has been.

- The values of 9 square miles and 5,000 initial student census could simply be reduced to a more realistic level in light of technological changes in education since the time those values were decided.
- Those two requirements could be eliminated altogether from state statute.
- The reasons those values exist may be better ensured in today's world by changing them to a basis of fiscal capacity of the new district and performance deficiencies of the district being separated from.

The second apparently fallacious traditional assumption is that any effort to change the 9 square miles and 5,000 students requirement for a new ISD formed by separating from an existing ISD would inevitably distill down solely to a head to head conflict between Addison and DISD.

If legislative change of the 9 and 5,000 requirements is sought on a statewide basis, all 1206 of the incorporated municipalities in the state of Texas have reason to consider if such a change is in their interests. Though it is yet unknown to what degree those interests align with Addison's, it cannot yet be ruled out that there may be a coalition of some consequence that can be assembled. Should that be the case, then this is not an Addison vs. DISD issue.

Further proof that the political landscape for education has changed is the once unimaginable idea that parents have the right to withdraw their child from a failing school and send him/her to another school of their choice. This was an uncommon occurrence a few years ago, but today occurs regularly.

The dynamics of keeping public education solely in the public sector, while still introducing the benefits of competition to improve the quality of public education, presents an opportunity for a legislative initiative which a significant number of municipalities (if not all of the 1206 incorporated municipalities in the state of Texas) are likely to view favorably. Indeed some might become partners with Addison in attempting to gain legislative approval.

If the Texas legislature creates a classification for schools chartered to an incorporated municipality, different from that of an ISD or the current form of charter school, they introduce a completely public entity competing to provide quality education. This eliminates the concern of public funds going anywhere other than an ISD being public funds going to private use, as is the case with vouchers or higher funding levels of charter schools. Such schools could have a standardized, streamlined application process, and could be provided the entire amount of taxes paid to the ISD on a pro-rated per-student basis from within that municipality.

Requirements for such diversion of educational taxes from an ISD would come with elevated performance requirements. Such requirements could easily be consistent with those envisioned by this committee for either an AISD or AMCS.

If municipalities are empowered to take educational improvement into their hands when served by an ISD failing at providing quality education, students, parents, municipalities, and the state of Texas are all benefited. There is every reason to expect the value of this can be widely perceived.

We are not saying traditional assumptions are wrong, just that there is no greater basis to assume they are correct. As we look to the future, the Town of Addison has an obligation to its citizens to determine if traditional assumptions will continue to hold valid. As one wise educator has said, "The future isn't what it used to be."

Appendix D

This article reprinted from:

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How to Bring Our Schools Out of the 20th Century

By Claudia Wallis, Sonja Steptoe

There's a dark little joke exchanged by educators with a dissident streak: Rip Van Winkle awakens in the 21st century after a hundred-year snooze and is, of course, utterly bewildered by what he sees. Men and women dash about, talking to small metal devices pinned to their ears. Young people sit at home on sofas, moving miniature athletes around on electronic screens. Older folk defy death and disability with metronomes in their chests and with hips made of metal and plastic. Airports, hospitals, shopping malls--every place Rip goes just baffles him. But when he finally walks into a schoolroom, the old man knows exactly where he is. "This is a school," he declares. "We used to have these back in 1906. Only now the blackboards are green."

American schools aren't exactly frozen in time, but considering the pace of change in other areas of life, our public schools tend to feel like throwbacks. Kids spend much of the day as their great-grandparents once did: sitting in rows, listening to teachers lecture, scribbling notes by hand, reading from textbooks that are out of date by the time they are printed. A yawning chasm (with an emphasis on yawning) separates the world inside the schoolhouse from the world outside.

For the past five years, the national conversation on education has focused on reading scores, math tests and closing the "achievement gap" between social classes. This is not a story about that conversation. This is a story about the big public conversation the nation is not having about education, the one that will ultimately determine not merely whether some fraction of our children get "left behind" but also whether an entire generation of kids will fail to make the grade in the global economy because they can't think their way through abstract problems, work in teams, distinguish good information from bad or speak a language other than English.

This week the conversation will burst onto the front page, when the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, a high-powered, bipartisan assembly of Education Secretaries and business, government and other education leaders releases a blueprint for rethinking American education from pre-K to 12 and beyond to better prepare students to thrive in the global economy. While that report includes some controversial proposals, there is nonetheless a remarkable consensus among educators and business and policy leaders on one key conclusion: we need to bring what we teach and how we teach into the 21st century.

Right now we're aiming too low. Competency in reading and math--the focus of so much No Child Left Behind (NCLB) testing--is the meager minimum. Scientific and technical skills are, likewise, utterly necessary but insufficient. Today's economy demands not only a high-level competence in the traditional academic disciplines but also what might be called 21st century skills. Here's what they are:

Knowing more about the world. Kids are global citizens now, even in small-town America, and they must learn to act that way. Mike Eskew, CEO of UPS, talks about needing workers who are "global trade literate, sensitive to foreign cultures, conversant in different languages"--not exactly strong points in the U.S., where fewer than half of high school students are enrolled in a foreign-language class and where the social-studies curriculum tends to fixate on U.S. history.

Thinking outside the box. Jobs in the new economy--the ones that won't get outsourced or automated--"put an enormous premium on creative and innovative skills, seeing patterns where other people see only chaos," says Marc Tucker, an author of the skills-commission report and president of the National Center on Education and the Economy. Traditionally that's been an American strength, but schools have become less daring in the back-to-basics climate of NCLB. Kids also must learn to think across disciplines, since that's where most new breakthroughs are made. It's interdisciplinary combinations--design and technology, mathematics and art--"that produce YouTube and Google," says Thomas Friedman, the best-selling author of The World Is Flat.

Becoming smarter about new sources of information. In an age of overflowing information and proliferating media, kids need to rapidly process what's coming at them and distinguish between what's reliable and what isn't. "It's important that students know how to manage it, interpret it, validate it, and how to act on it," says Dell executive Karen Bruett, who serves on the board of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, a group of corporate and education leaders focused on upgrading American education.

Developing good people skills: EQ, or emotional intelligence, is as important as IQ for success in today's workplace. "Most innovations today involve large teams of people," says former Lockheed Martin CEO Norman Augustine. "We have to emphasize communication skills, the ability to work in teams and with people from different cultures."

Can our public schools, originally designed to educate workers for agrarian life and industrial-age factories, make the necessary shifts? The Skills commission will argue that it's possible only if we add new depth and rigor to our curriculum and standardized exams, redeploy the dollars we spend on education, reshape the teaching force and reorganize who runs the schools. But without waiting for such a revolution, enterprising administrators around the country have begun to update their schools, often with ideas and support from local businesses. The state of Michigan, conceding that it can no longer count on the ailing auto industry to absorb its poorly educated and low-skilled workers, is retooling its high schools, instituting what are among the most rigorous graduation requirements in the nation. Elsewhere, organizations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Asia Society are pouring money and expertise into model programs to show the way.

What It Means to Be a Global Student

Quick! How many ways can you combine nickels, dimes and pennies to get 20¢? That's the challenge for students in a second-grade math class at Seattle's John Stanford International School, and hands are flying up with answers. The students sit at tables of four manipulating play money. One boy shouts "10 plus 10"; a girl offers "10 plus 5 plus 5," only it sounds like this: "Ju, tasu, go, tasu, go." Down the hall, third-graders are learning to interpret charts and graphs showing how many hours of sleep people need at different ages. "¿Cuantas horas duerme un bebé?" asks the teacher Sabrina Storlie.

This public elementary school has taken the idea of global education and run with it. All students take some classes in either Japanese or Spanish. Other subjects are taught in English, but the content has an international flavor. The school pulls its 393 students from the surrounding highly diverse neighborhood and by lottery from other parts of the city. Generally, its scores on state tests are at or above average, although those exams barely scratch the surface of what Stanford students learn.

Before opening the school seven years ago, principal Karen Kodama surveyed 1,500 business leaders on which languages to teach (plans for Mandarin were dropped for lack of classroom space) and which skills and disciplines. "No. 1 was technology," she recalls. Even first-graders at Stanford begin to use PowerPoint and Internet tools. "Exposure to world cultures was also an important trait cited by the executives," says Kodama, so that instead of circling back to the Pilgrims and Indians every autumn, children at Stanford do social-studies units on Asia, Africa, Australia, Mexico and South America. Students actively apply the lessons in foreign language and culture by video-conferencing with sister schools in Japan, Africa and Mexico, by exchanging messages, gifts and joining in charity projects.

Stanford International shows what's possible for a public elementary school, although it has the rare advantage of support from corporations like Nintendo and Starbucks, which contribute to its $1.7 million-a-year budget. Still, dozens of U.S. school districts have found ways to orient some of their students toward the global economy. Many have opened schools that offer the international baccalaureate (I.B.) program, a rigorous, off-the-shelf curriculum recognized by universities around the world and first introduced in 1968--well before globalization became a buzzword.

To earn an I.B. diploma, students must prove written and spoken proficiency in a second language, write a 4,000-word college-level research paper, complete a real-world service project and pass rigorous oral and written subject exams. Courses offer an international perspective, so even a lesson on the American Revolution will interweave sources from Britain and France with views from the Founding Fathers. "We try to build something we call international mindedness," says Jeffrey Beard, director general of the International Baccalaureate Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. "These are students who can grasp issues across national borders. They have an understanding of nuances and complexity and a balanced approach to problem solving." Despite stringent certification requirements, I.B. schools are growing in the U.S.--from about 350 in 2000 to 682 today. The U.S. Department of Education has a pilot effort to bring the program to more low-income students.

Real Knowledge in the Google Era

Learn the names of all the rivers in South America. That was the assignment given to Deborah Stipek's daughter Meredith in school, and her mom, who's dean of the Stanford University School of Education, was not impressed. "That's silly," Stipek told her daughter. "Tell your teacher that if you need to know anything besides the Amazon, you can look it up on Google." Any number of old-school assignments--memorizing the battles of the Civil War or the periodic table of the elements--now seem faintly absurd. That kind of information, which is poorly retained unless you routinely use it, is available at a keystroke. Still, few would argue that an American child shouldn't learn the causes of the Civil War or understand how the periodic table reflects the atomic structure and properties of the elements. As school critic E.D. Hirsch Jr. points out in his book, The Knowledge Deficit, kids need a substantial fund of information just to make sense of reading materials beyond the grade-school level. Without mastering the fundamental building blocks of math, science or history, complex concepts are impossible.

Many analysts believe that to achieve the right balance between such core knowledge and what educators call "portable skills"--critical thinking, making connections between ideas and knowing how to keep on learning--the U.S. curriculum needs to become more like that of Singapore, Belgium and Sweden, whose students outperform American students on math and science tests. Classes in these countries dwell on key concepts that are taught in depth and in careful sequence, as opposed to a succession of forgettable details so often served in U.S. classrooms. Textbooks and tests support this approach. "Countries from Germany to Singapore have extremely small textbooks that focus on the most powerful and generative ideas," says Roy Pea, co-director of the Stanford Center for Innovations in Learning. These might be the key theorems in math, the laws of thermodynamics in science or the relationship between supply and demand in economics. America's bloated textbooks, by contrast, tend to gallop through a mind-numbing stream of topics and subtopics in an attempt to address a vast range of state standards.

Depth over breadth and the ability to leap across disciplines are exactly what teachers aim for at the Henry Ford Academy, a public charter school in Dearborn, Mich. This fall, 10th-graders in Charles Dershimer's science class began a project that combines concepts from earth science, chemistry, business and design. After reading about Nike's efforts to develop a more environmentally friendly sneaker, students had to choose a consumer product, analyze and explain its environmental impact and then develop a plan for re-engineering it to reduce pollution costs without sacrificing its commercial appeal. Says Dershimer: "It's a challenge for them and for me."

A New Kind of Literacy

The juniors in Bill Stroud's class are riveted by a documentary called Loose Change unspooling on a small TV screen at the Baccalaureate School for Global Education, in urban Astoria, N.Y. The film uses 9/11 footage and interviews with building engineers and Twin Towers survivors to make an oddly compelling if paranoid case that interior explosions unrelated to the impact of the airplanes brought down the World Trade Center on that fateful day. Afterward, the students--an ethnic mix of New Yorkers with their own 9/11 memories--dive into a discussion about the elusive nature of truth.

Raya Harris finds the video more convincing than the official version of the facts. Marisa Reichel objects. "Because of a movie, you are going to change your beliefs?" she demands. "Just because people heard explosions doesn't mean there were explosions. You can say you feel the room spinning, but it isn't." This kind of discussion about what we know and how we know it is typical of a theory of knowledge class, a required element for an international-baccalaureate diploma. Stroud has posed this question to his class on the blackboard: "If truth is difficult to prove in history, does it follow that all versions are equally acceptable?"

Throughout the year, the class will examine news reports, websites, propaganda, history books, blogs, even pop songs. The goal is to teach kids to be discerning consumers of information and to research, formulate and defend their own views, says Stroud, who is founder and principal of the four-year-old public school, which is located in a repurposed handbag factory.

Classes like this, which teach key aspects of information literacy, remain rare in public education, but more and more universities and employers say they are needed as the world grows ever more deluged with information of variable quality. Last year, in response to demand from colleges, the Educational Testing Service unveiled a new, computer-based exam designed to measure information-and-communication-technology literacy. A pilot study of the test with 6,200 high school seniors and college freshmen found that only half could correctly judge the objectivity of a website. "Kids tend to go to Google and cut and paste a research report together," says Terry Egan, who led the team that developed the new test. "We kind of assumed this generation was so comfortable with technology that they know how to use it for research and deeper thinking," says Egan. "But if they're not taught these skills, they don't necessarily pick them up."

Learning 2.0

The chairman of Sun Microsystems was up against one of the most vexing challenges of modern life: a third-grade science project. Scott McNealy had spent hours searching the Web for a lively explanation of electricity that his son could understand. "Finally I found a very nice, animated, educational website showing electrons zooming around and tests after each section. We did this for about an hour and a half and had a ball--a great father-son moment of learning. All of a sudden we ran out of runway because it was a site to help welders, and it then got into welding." For McNealy the experience, three years ago, provided one of life's aha! moments: "It made me wonder why there isn't a website where I can just go and have anything I want to learn, K to 12, online, browser based and free."

His solution: draw on the Wikipedia model to create a collection of online courses that can be updated, improved, vetted and built upon by innovative teachers, who, he notes, "are always developing new materials and methods of instruction because they aren't happy with what they have." And who better to create such a site than McNealy, whose company has led the way in designing open-source computer software? He quickly raised some money, created a nonprofit and--voilà!--Curriki.org made its debut January 2006, and has been growing fast. Some 450 courses are in the works, and about 3,000 people have joined as members. McNealy reports that a teenager in Kuwait has already completed the introductory physics and calculus classes in 18 days.

Curriki, however, isn't meant to replace going to school but to supplement it and offer courses that may not be available locally. It aims to give teachers classroom-tested content materials and assessments that are livelier and more current and multimedia-based than printed textbooks. Ultimately, it could take the Web 2.0 revolution to school, closing that yawning gap between how kids learn at school and how they do everything else. Educators around the country and overseas are already discussing ways to certify Curriki's online course work for credit.

Some states are creating their own online courses. "In the 21st century, the ability to be a lifelong learner will, for many people, be dependent on their ability to access and benefit from online learning," says Michael Flanagan, Michigan's superintendent of public instruction, which is why Michigan's new high school graduation requirements, which roll out next year, include completing at least one course online.

A Dose of Reality

Teachers need not fear that they will be made obsolete. They will, however, feel increasing pressure to bring their methods--along with the curriculum--into line with the way the modern world works. That means putting a greater emphasis on teaching kids to collaborate and solve problems in small groups and apply what they've learned in the real world. Besides, research shows that kids learn better that way than with the old chalk-and-talk approach.

At suburban Farmington High in Michigan, the engineering-technology department functions like an engineering firm, with teachers as project managers, a Ford Motor Co. engineer as a consultant and students working in teams. The principles of calculus, physics, chemistry and engineering are taught through activities that fill the hallways with a cacophony of nailing, sawing and chattering. The result: the kids learn to apply academic principles to the real world, think strategically and solve problems.

Such lessons also teach students to show respect for others as well as to be punctual, responsible and work well in teams. Those skills were badly missing in recently hired high school graduates, according to a survey of over 400 human-resource professionals conducted by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. "Kids don't know how to shake your hand at graduation," says Rudolph Crew, superintendent of the Miami-Dade school system. Deportment, he notes, used to be on the report card. Some of the nation's more forward-thinking schools are bringing it back. It's one part of 21st century education that sleepy old Rip would recognize.